



February 27, 2019

Dear St. Ann School Families, Faculty and Staff,

Over the last few weeks, I realize there has been much discussion about the recent decision not to permit a same sex couple to enroll their child in our school. I have heard from numerous school families and non-school parishioners on this decision and have had meetings with several individuals who have strong opinions on this matter. It is apparent to me that all these opinions come from a place of love and compassion for the family and the desire for inclusivity within our school and church community.

When the question of enrollment first arose, I sought the advice of the Archdiocese since as a parochial school we are subject to the guidance of the Archdiocese on the application of Church doctrine. To summarize, the Archdiocese states that since same sex unions are not in conformance with the Church's teaching on sacramental marriage and these unions have no current ability to bring their relationship into conformity, the parents cannot model behaviors and attitudes consistent with the Church's teachings. This creates a conflict for those children and what is experienced at home. It also could become a source of confusion for other school children. For these reasons, the Archdiocese advised against admission.

It is true that other dioceses across the country have views on same sex unions that provide avenues for the children of these couples to attend Catholic schools. Other local schools not affiliated with our Archdiocese also have different policies. Each diocese has the ability to form policy on these matters while individual diocesan schools do not.

I have communicated to the Archdiocese the concerns raised by St. Ann parishioners as a result of this decision. These parishioners and I plan to continue dialog with each other and the Archdiocese. This is not an attempt to undermine Church doctrine but to find common understanding to meet the ever-changing landscape of our society.

As your pastor, I am distressed over the division this sensitive and complex issue has caused within our school and church. I pray that through constructive dialog and the guidance of the Holy Spirit that we can come together as a community to do God's will in all things. I ask for your prayers for healing, peace and understanding as we move forward as a faith community and Church.

With the promise of prayer,

Fr. Craig J. Maxim
Pastor